

Message Text

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ACTION IO-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /007 W
-----123340 230145Z /73
R 222345Z FEB 78
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9701

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: AORG, UNOPI, APER
SUBJECT: UN PERSONNEL: SENIOR POSTS IN OPI

REF: (A) USUN 392, (B) STATE 036858

1. SUMMARY: AKATANI HAS REVIEWED WITH WALDHEIM VARIOUS SENIOR OPI APPOINTMENTS, BUT SYG EVIDENTLY HAS NOT YET GIVEN FINAL APPROVAL TO APPOINTMENT OF STAJDUHAR TO REPLACE POWELL AS SPOKESMAN OR TO RELATED MOVES IN OPI. AKATANI SAYS HIS POLICY HAS BEEN TO REDUCE NUMBERS OF NORTH AMERICANS IN OPI AND CLAIMS U.S. CONCURRED IN IT. AKATANI SAID ENGLISH-SPEAKING DEPUTY, WITH SUBSTANTIAL MANAGERIAL DUTIES, WOULD BE APPOINTED IF STAJDUHAR SUCCEEDS POWELL. HE URGED THAT WE NOMINATE SUCCESSOR TO KENNEY. USUN TOLD AKATANI WE DO NOT CONSIDER OVERSELVES OVER-REPRESENTED IN OPI AND INDICATED WE MIGHT GET INSTRUCTIONS TO NOMINATE SUCCESSOR TO POWELL IF STAJDUHAR'S SELECTION NOT FINALIZED YET. END SUMMARY

2. MISOFF DISCUSSED WITH USYG(OPI) AKATANI SUCCESSION TO SENIOR POSTS IN OPI HELD BY U.S. CITIZENS. AKATANI SAID
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HE HAD SPENT HOUR AND A HALF WITH SYG FEBRUARY 18 DISCUSSING GENERAL OPI PERSONNEL POLICY AND VARIOUS IMPENDING APPOINTMENTS. ALTHOUGH AKATANI REFERRED TO THIS AUDIENCE SEVERAL TIMES, HE DID NOT INDICATE THAT SYG HAD REACHED DECISION ON APPOINTMENT OF SUCCESSOR TO POWELL OR RELATED ISSUES.

3. AKATANI REPEATED THAT NUMBER OF NORTH AMERICANS EMPLOYED IN OPI WAS VERY HIGH WHEN HE TOOK CHARGE. WHILE IT WAS CLEAR, AKATANI CONTINUED, THAT U RULES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF PROFESSIONAL LEVEL POSITIONS APPLY TO UN AS A WHOLE, COUNTRIES WITH LITTLE OR NO REPRESENTATION IN OPI HAVE PRESSURED HIM TO APPLY IT THERE ALSO. AKATANI SAID HE HAD RESISTED THESE PRESSURES. QUALIFICATIONS IN ENGLISH AND IN MODERN MEDIA TECHNOLOGY REQUIRED TO WORK IN OPI NATURALLY LEAD TO EMPLOYMENT OF NORTH AMERICANS IN LARGE NUMBERS. SOON AFTER TAKING OVER OPI, AKATANI CONTINUED, HE HAD EMBARKED UPON POLICY OF REDUCING NUMBER OF NORTH AMERICANS IN OPI, AND THIS GOAL HAD CONCURRENCE OF SYG AND US. WITH DEPARTURE OF POWELL, AKATANI INDICATED, ATTRITION OF NORTH AMERICANS IN SENIOR-LEVEL POSTS AT OPI WILL HAVE GONE FAR ENOUGH, AND NO FURTHER THINNING OUT IS CONTEMPLATED OR DESIRED. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, AKATANI SAID THAT U.S. "CONCURRENCE" CONSISTED OF ABSENCE OF ANY OBJECTION BY USG TO HIS INTENTIONS AS THEY BECAME GENERALLY KNOWN.

4. MISOFF SAID REMARKS REPORTED REF (A) HAD CAUSED CONCERN IN DEPARTMENT. WHILE U.S. CONCEDES NUMBER OF AMERICANS IN OPI IS SUBSTANTIAL, ONLY NINE POSITIONS ARE HELD BY AMERICANS AT P-5 AND ABOVE, AND WE DO NOT CONSIDER THIS LARGE. USG COULD ACCEPT REDUCTION IN TOTAL NUMBER OF AMERICANS IN OPI CONCURRENT WITH BETTER DISTRIBUTION OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEM AMONG GRADES AND RESPONSIBLE POSITIONS. MISOFF POINTED OUT THAT USG DID NOT ADVANCE NOMINEES TO REPLACE HAYWARD (DEPUTY DIRECTOR IN CHARGE OF VISUAL SERVICE) OR LENNON (SENIOR INFORMATION OFFICER IN CESI) WHEN LATTER TWO RETIRED. USG DOES NOT ASSESS POSITION OF AMERICANS IN OPI ON BASIS OF ABSOLUTE NUMBER ALONE, BUT COMPARES THEM TO NATIONALITIES, PARTICULARLY SOVIETS, HOLDING COMPARABLE POSITIONS.

5. TURNING TO POWELL'S SUCCESSION, AKATANI SAID SYG WALDHEIM IS VERY PARTIAL TO STAJDUHAR. AKATANI CONTINUED THAT STAJDUHAR IS DEEPLY DEVOTED TO SYG WALDHEIM, SCREENS MYRIADS OF NEWSPAPERS DAILY FOR REPORTS ON UN, AND SYG PARTICULARLY, AND FEEDS THESE GLEANINGS TO SYG AT A RATE SUFFICIENT THAT LATTER FREQUENTLY COMPLAINS OF THEIR ABUNDANCE. AKATANI SAID IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT UN SPOKESMAN HAS INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH SYG, AND INDICATED STAJDUHAR ENJOYS SUCH. HE ALSO ARGUED THAT SPOKESMAN SHOULD BE "SOMEONE WHO KNOWS UN WELL", AND THIS ALMOST LIMITED CHOICE TO INTERNAL CANDIDATES.

6. AKATANI SPECIFICALLY FAILED TO REITERATE HIS EARLIER

ASSERTION THAT STAJDUHAR IS WALDHEIM'S CHOICE AND WOULD GO NO FURTHER THAN TO CONFIRM THAT STAJDUHAR HAS INSIDE TRACK. NOR DID AKATANI REPEAT THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR U.S. TO ADVANCE CANDIDATES FOR POWELL'S POSITION. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUERY ON THIS POINT, AKATANI AGAIN REFERRED TO DESIRABILITY OF CANDIDATE ("WHO KNOWS UN WELL"), AND INDICATED THAT NO AMERICANS AROUND UN HAD BEEN GROOMED AS POSSIBLE SUCCESSORS.

7. MISSOFF SAID FOREGOING EXCHANGE REGARDING POWELL'S SUCCESSION WOULD BE REPORTED TO DEPARTMENT. HE INDICATED

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CONSEQUENCE MIGHT BE INSTRUCTIONS TO PRESENT CANDIDATES FOR CONSIDERATION. AKATANI RECEIVED THIS IMPASSIVELY, BUT DID NOT PROTEST OR ADVISE AGAINST SUCH NOMINATIONS.

8. MISSOFF OBSERVED THAT POSITIONS OF SPOKESMAN AND CHIEF OF PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS DIVISION ORIGINALLY HAD BEEN SEPARATE. HE NOTED CORRIDOR TALK THAT STAJDUHAR IS NOT KEEN ON ASSUMING MANAGERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES. AKATANI WAS ESPECIALLY OPAQUE IN DISCUSSING THIS ASPECT OF SITUATION. HE CONCEDED ORIGINAL DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY, AND HE INDICATED THAT NEW DEPUTY POSITION, PROBABLY CARRYING SUBSTANTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR MANAGING PRESS AND PUBLICATIONS DIVISION, WOULD BE CREATED WERE STAJDUHAR NAMED SPOKESMAN. INCUMBENT OF THIS NEW POSITION DEFINITELY WOULD HAVE TO BE NATIVE ENGLISH SPEAKER. AKATANI INDICATED NO RESISTANCE TO U.S. PRESENTING CANDIDATES FOR THIS JOB, BUT INDICATED ALSO THAT IN-

HOUSE STAFF WOULD BE REVIEWED FIRST FOR INTERNAL CANDIDATE.

9. AKATANI WENT TO SOME LENGTHS TO STRESS IMPORTANCE OF CHIEF OF PUBLICATIONS SERVICE POST HELD BY ROBERT KENNEY. HE FELT U.S. SHOULD BEGIN IDENTIFYING CANDIDATES TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SUCCEED KENNEY PROMPTLY, AND SUGGESTED OUR SEARCH MIGHT EXTEND TO U.S. CITIZENS IN COMPARABLE POSITIONS IN OTHER UN AGENCIES. IN RESPONSE TO DIRECT QUESTION AS TO TIMING, AKATANI SAID DATE OF KENNEY'S RETIREMENT IS "UNDER DISCUSSION NOW", AND DECLINED TO EXCLUDE POSSIBILITY THAT IT MIGHT COME ABOUT THIS YEAR.

10. COMMENT: FOR REASONS NOT CLEAR TO USUN, WALDHEIM EVIDENTLY HAS NOT REPEAT NOT MADE FINAL DECISION TO APPOINT STAJDUHAR AS PRESS SPOKESMAN. AKATANI DID HIS BEST TO INDICATE APPOINTMENT IS FOREGONE CONCLUSION, BUT PASSED UP SEVERAL CHANCES TO SAY THAT EXPLICITLY. USUN CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS WOULD BE REQUIRED TO OBTAIN APPOINTMENT FOR AMERICAN. NEVERTHELESS, OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT WELL-QUALIFIED CANDIDATES STILL APPEARS TO BE OPEN, THOUGH IT MAY NOT REMAIN SO FOR LONG. DEPARTMENT SHOULD, IN ANY CASE, IMMEDIATELY BEGIN PREPARING SLATES FOR CANDIDATES FOR DEPUTY JOB THAT WOULD OPEN UP SHOULD STAJDUHAR BE PROMOTED AND FOR CHIEF OF PUBLICATION SERVICE TO SUCCEED KENNEY, WHOSE RETIREMENT MAY WELL COME LATER THIS YEAR. YOUNG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978USUNN00628
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780083-0133
Format: TEL
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780225/aaaaavcs.tel
Line Count: 204
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 45779ed1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS, ONLY
Reference: 78 USUN NEW YORK 392, 78 STATE 36858
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3513536
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UN PERSONNEL: SENIOR POSTS IN OPI
TAGS: AORG, PORG, APER, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/45779ed1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014